THE SNOW-FALL.

The snow has begun in the gloaming,
And busily all the night
Had been heaping field and highway
With a silence deep and white.

Every pine and fir and hemlock
Wore ermine too dear for an earl,
And the poorest twig on the elm tree
Was ridged inch deep with pearl.

From sheds new-roofed with Carrara
Came Chanticleer's muffled crow;
The stiff rails were softened to swan's down,
And still fluttered down the snow.

I stood and watched by the window
The noiseless work of the sky,
And the sudden flurries of snow-birds,
Like brown leaves whirling by.

I thought of a mound in sweet Auburn,
Where a little headstone stood;
How the flakes were folding it gently,
As did robins the babes in the wood.

Up spoke our own little Mabel,
Saying: "Father who makes it snow?"
And I told of the good All-father
Who cares for us here below.

Again I looked at the snow-fall,
And thought of the leaden sky
That arched o'er our first great sorrow
When the mound was heaped so high.

I remembered the gradual patience
That fell from that cloud like snow,
Flake by flake, healing and hiding
The scar of our deep-plunged woe.

And again to the child I whispered:
"The snow that husheth all,
Darling, the merciful Father
Alone can make it fall."

Then, with eyes that saw not, I kissed her;
And she kissing back, could not know
That my kiss was given to her sister,
Folded close under deepening snow.

—*James Russell Lowell.*

THE HAND OF FATE.

MARY KYLE DALLAS IN NEW YORK LEDGER.

When I was still going to school, in the graduating class, to be sure, and past sixteen, and very large for my age, four of us made up our minds, one Saturday afternoon, to have our fortunes told.

There was a gypsy camp out on the common beyond the town, with vans, tents, cauldrons, and the whole paraphernalia of gipsy life, and everybody walked or rode out to visit it. We decided to walk, as it was a bright, cool day, enjoyed ourselves much better than if we had been cooped up in the stage, or even in a carriage.

It was October. Some of the foilage had changed color a little, and there were red and golden tints amongst the greens. Now and then the wind shook the trees and scattered showers of leaves upon the road. Purple asters and golden rod were still in bloom. Here and there grew crimson squaw berries, and bitter-sweet burnt like gold along the stone fences. Each of us gathered a great bunch, and we held them in our hands as we entered the path that led into the hollow where the camp lay. Young and romantic, we were ready to be delighted with everything—with the swarthy gypsy selling a colt to a stout farmer; with the old grandmother dandling a dusky baby on her knees; and the dirty, black-eyed children squatting about everywhere.

There were visitors in plenty, and most of the women were busy telling fortunes. As we approached, a woman, who had been sitting on a fallen log, arose, and a man, who had been talking to her, pulled his hat over his eyes and turned away, like the villain in a melo-drama. The woman were a wide-brimmed straw hat, with a wreath of artificial flowers around it. Her hair was dressed stiffly in well-oiled "bands." She had on a flowered delain gown, and a little red woolen shawl covered her shoulders. She certainly was neither young nor beautiful, as the "gypsy maid" of song and drama must inevitably be; but she smiled amiably upon us, and calling us "pretty young ladies," asked if we would have our fortunes told.

Clare, our spokeswoman, declared that to have been our intention in coming, and we soon proved the truth of the adage. "A fool and his money is soon parted," by dropping each a dollar into the gypsy's palm.

"Who shall I begin with, pretty ladies?" asked the woman. "And will you have your fortunes told privately or together?"

Clare answered that we had no secrets from each other, and that 'this young lady," indicating Belle with the point of her pretty parasol, "would be the first to have a glimpse into futurity."

Belle, blushing rosy red, put out her little hand, and we all listened while the gypsy told her that some one with a title, a lord or a duke, would cross the sea to fall in love with her; that she would live in a palace beyond the ocean, and be waited on like a queen. There was more, but I have forgotten it. Belle was delighted, and Rose was the next victim

The gypsy told her that she woul marry a great musician, and we all laughed, for we knew that Mr. Martelli, who taught the piano to the graduating class, was very much in love with her.

Then Clare seated herself on the old log, and opened her hand, palm upward. It was large and handsome. Clare was something like "Lady Jane, not pretty but massive." The gypsy told her that she would be a soldier's wife.

Oddly enough it really happened not a year afterwards. We were all at the wedding. The next day Colonel V—— rode out of the town at the head of his regiment. He never came back. Clare wears her widow's vail for him yet, and his miniature lies over her heart day and night forever.

But where have I strayed to? Let me go back to the bright autumn day, and the gypsy camp, and the four school-girls, half mocking half believing, very merry and a little frightened. It was my turn, and I sat before the dark, hard-eyed woman, with a face like a smiling ogress carved in black walnut, and listened as she peered at the lines in my palm.

"You are a tall young lady, Miss," she said, at last; "but you go to school yet. You are fond of music, and you have an elderly gentleman relation who takes you out a good bit to places of amusement and the like. I don't see whether it's your papa or your grandpa, but it's a relation."

This was so true that I came near crying out, "It is Uncle Henry," but I bethought myself in time.

"You wear blue a good deal," she went on, "and you have a blue fan. At a concert one evening you dropped it. The gentleman who picked it up is to be your husband. The stars say so."

"How white you turn, Essie," cried Clare.

"I feel faint," I said. "It's true I dropped a blue fan at the opera when Patti sang Traviata, and a gentleman picked it up, but I should not know him from Adam."

"You'll meet him again, however, Miss," said the gypsy. "Some Sunday at church he will hand you a prayer-book with the place marked with a flower; when you see that you will know your fate has come. His first name is Robin. He has black eyes, black hair, and a dimple in his chin deep enough to put your finger in; and he wears a mustache."

I had certainly had enough for my dollar. We all walked home together rather seriously, but in a day or two the impression passed away, and we almost forgot how strong it had been.

The rest of October was very unpleasant. We had prayers in the school-room instead of going to church. But on the first Sunday in November the sky was blue and the air clear, and we all set forth for church together.

It so happened that there were four new scholars and the seats belonging to the school were full, four of us were left over to claim the courtesy of our neighbors. I was invited to enter a pew occupied only by one old lady, and as my prayer-book was in the school-rack I had none, and did not like to help myself without invitation. As I hesitated, a book was passed to me from the pew behind me.

"This is the place," said a charming voice, and as I bowed my thanks, I saw that the page was marked with a pressed daisy.

Instantly the visit to the gipsy camp and the fortune teller's prophecy rushed into my memory. I could not have helped looking at the pew behind, if my life had depended on it. I actually turned my head and looked full at the gentleman who had given me the book.

He had black hair and eyes, a long mustache, and a dimple on his chin that you could put your finger in.

The congregation were rising; I arose too. I held the book in my hand, and softly turned to the fly-leaf before the title-page. A name was written there—Robin Armytage.

Who can blame me if I said to myself: "Certainly I have met my fate at last."

It is vulgar to "flirt"—wrong to make acquaintance without introduction, but it was all Robin's fault. When he held his umbrella over me one rainy day; when he met me as I went shopping for Berlin wool for my afghan, and walked with me, and talked; when old Billberry, who made the fires for the school, came upon me in the the garden one morning, and pointing to a gentleman, where he had no business to be, looking over the fence, said: "Look here, Miss. This here is Mr. Robin Armytage. Proud to make you knowed to each other"—who could go against fate? And so I had the impudence to introduce him to uncle in the holidays, and in three months we were engaged. I graduated, left school, and soon after married Robin, and was as happy as a bird, or a butterfly, or a squirrel.

I had told Robin about the gypsy, of course, and he had agreed with me that it was all very wonderful so often; and at last, one bright spring evening, as we walked together, I spoke again of the strange prophecy, and particularly of the fact that the gypsy had known his name, and I was growing a little excited over it all, when Robin put his arm about my waist, and drew me close to him.

"My darling," he said, "I can't deceive you any longer. There was no prophecy about it whatever. I had been in love with you for weeks—had watched you everywhere, and followed you to the camp. I paid the gipsy five dollars to say just what I told her, and gave the old sexton two to get me into the pew behind you. Of course, I also bribed Billberry. All is fair in love as in war. You forgive me, don't you?"

For a little while I wouldn't, but at last I gave in. One must, you know.

"I thought it was the hand of fate that guided me," I said, "or I'd never have spoken to you or let Billberry introduce you, or deceived uncle."

"It was all very wrong, I know," Robin answered. "It would have been very shocking if it had been some other fellow, but you see it was I."

Yes, it was him. That seemed to make all the difference.

"O, Robin, the hand of fate was in it, I believe, after all."

Burdensome Millions.

Chicago Inter Ocean.

The marble palace on Fifth avenue, New York, which was erected by the late A. T. Stewart at a cost of $1,000,000, and which contains paintings and statuary valued at an equal sum, not to mention the elaborate furniture, the golden chandeliers, and other items that are worth fortunes, is but a mausoleum now. The widow occupies it alone, for she has no one whose society she enjoys. Her niece, who lived with her for a time, is married, and remains in Europe, for she is said to dread the lonesome house, where the window-curtains have not been raised for years, and which, to all outward appearances, is unoccupied. But Mrs. Stewart, a weak and withered old woman, lives there attended by an army of servants. She never goes out but to visit the house of Judge Hilton, her husband's partner and executor, and lives in deadly fear lest some ruffians may steal her and hold her for ransom, as they did her husband's bones. She receives so many begging and threatening letters that she no longer opens her own mail, but it is all sent to Judge Hilton to read and assort, who sends her such letters as he thinks she would like to see. She very often takes her meals at his house, which is only a few doors away, but never goes even that far without being attended by two trusty servants. Her milliens are burdens to her, and her life could not be more unhappy than it is. Her old friends attempted at one time to persuade her to re-enter society and she tried it but found no enjoyment and relapsed into seclusion.

—A Philadelphia firm has sued the Western Union Telegraph company for damages for missending a cipher telegram. The telegram consisted of the word "ongeoweox," and it read when received "ongeoweegx," and resulted in the shipment of goods of an entirely different character from those desired.

HOUSEHOLD NOTES.

FRUIT PUDDINGS.—A good plain fruit pudding is made of one cup of sugar, half a cup of butter and two eggs. Beat them all together, then add a cup of sour milk, one teaspoonful of soda dissolved in hot water and stirred in the milk, three cups of flour and one cup of raisins; add spice to suit your taste; a little mace is a favorite flavoring with some cooks for this pudding. Put in a pudding dish and steam for two hours. Serve with wine sauce or with ordinary pudding sauce. Take pains to leave no lumps of flour in the batter. If simple and commonplace dishes are made with care they are often more acceptable than many more elaborate dishes carelessly thrown together.

CREAM FRUIT CAKE.—A rich cake, which is perfectly delicious, is made by beating together half a pound of butter and three-quarters of a pound of sugar. Beat these till they are both white and light. Beat the whites and yolks separately of seven eggs, stir the yolks and a small wine glass of brandy in with the butter and sugar; then add the whites of the eggs, half of three-quarters of a grated nutmeg and a pound and a half of flour; and, lastly, stir in nearly a pound of seeded and chopped raisins and a half a pint of thick sweet cream. Bake in one or two tins. Line the tins with paper, the sides as well as the bottom, as the cake is so rich there is danger of its breaking when lifted out.

COFFEE CAKE.—Coffee cakes for breakfast are made by beating three eggs very light, and adding two cups of brown sugar, one cup of butter, one cup of sweet milk, one teaspoonful of soda, two teaspoonfuls of cream of tartar, or, if you prefer, use two heaping teaspoonfuls of baking powder; the cakes are not so likely to dry soon if the soda and cream of tartar are used. Make a stiff dough by kneading in sifted flour, then roll it out to about half an inch in thickness, sift ground cinnamon and a little powdered sugar over it, roll it up as if for jelly-rolls, and cut off slices half an inch thick, dip in granulated sugar, and bake in a tin which you have first buttered well and then scattered flour over.

APPLE PUDDING.—An excellent and delicate apple pudding is made by following these directions: Mix two tablespoonfuls of arrowroot with one pint of cream—do not use milk if you can possibly get cream; stir in two tablespoonfuls of sugar; let this boil gently, stirring it constantly for three or four minutes, not longer; meanwhile slice some tart apples very thin, and put in a pudding dish, with sugar and little lumps of butter between the layers of apple. When the arrowroot and cream have done boiling, pour them over the apples, and set the dish in the oven; with even and moderate heat the pudding will need to bake for half an hour, though not longer. If you have been as generous as you should have been with the butter and sugar, no sauce is required or expected with this pudding.

APRICOT ICE.—A delicious ice is that flavored with apricots. The canned ones, when good, answer every purpose. To the juice of two lemons allow seven or eight apricots, or possibly ten if they are small; remove the skins, and blanch and pound to a paste a few of the kernels. To this add half a pint of water and two ounces of sugar. Let this stand in an earthen jar or punch-bowl for an hour and a half; then strain it. After it is strained stir in the whites of three eggs beaten to a firm froth, with four ounces of powdered sugar beaten in with them. Freeze. To serve with the rich cake the recipe for which is given this week, nothing can be more appropriate at the close of an afternoon lunch; and, by the way, one o'clock is the hour par excellence for the fashionable lunch party, though it is usually served a little later.

—Oysters are becoming scarce in Chesapeake bay. Until within the last two or three years two men could gather fifty bushels in a day, but now the quantity does not often exceed ten bushels.

—Theodore G. Ellis, who was colonel of the 14th Connecticut volunteers, and served on General Hancock's staff at Gettysburg, died at Hartford, the 10th inst.